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called on to speak of it. The best part of it, she felt, was the work of serving the rural pastors of New England by sending them books post-paid both ways, and bulletins of reading lists, etc. Those from the Middle West expressed the need that is felt for such a library in Chicago, to meet the needs of the rural pastors and other social and religious workers of the Mississippi Valley, without regard to denominational lines. It was pointed out that the remnant of the Chicago Theological Seminary Library not needed by the Chicago University, with which the Seminary is becoming affiliated, might form the nucleus of such a library, and it was most earnestly hoped that some broad-minded, warm-hearted man, with sufficient means,

would see in this a supremely great opportunity of serving the country and the cause of Christianity in general.

It was pointed out that some of the seminary libraries were already doing a similar work that was much appreciated. It was felt, however, that Chicago needs a great, interdenominational library to supplement the existing seminary libraries, and so liberal in its management as to make it easy for those without adequate opportunities of securing religious books, to get them.

The meeting then adjourned for informal discussion and conversation.

JOHN F. LYONS,  
Secretary.

## DECIMAL CLASSIFICATION ROUND TABLE

A well-attended round table on decimal classification, conducted by the Advisory committee on decimal classification, was held at the New Monterey Hotel, Wednesday evening, June 28. Many suggestions

were made, which will give additional material for the committee to work on.

Two meetings of the committee were also held during the conference week, at which all nine members were present.

## LEAGUE OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONS

### Mid-year Meeting, Asbury Park, N. J., June 28 and 30, 1916

#### FIRST SESSION

The first session of the League of Library Commissions met in the Ball Room of the New Monterey Hotel, June 28, at 2:30 p. m., Miss Fannie C. Rawson, president, presiding. The following states were represented by one or more members of their commissions and staffs: Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, Wisconsin.

As the annual meeting of the League is

now held in Chicago in the winter, there was no business transacted.

The program was opened by Miss Mary L. Hopkins of Seaford, Delaware, with an entertaining account of "Book Wagon Delivery" in Sussex County, Delaware.

(See p. 248)

In the discussion of this paper, Miss Mary L. Titcomb of Hagerstown, Maryland, told on request some of the details of the work of the book wagon in Washington County, Maryland. Mr. Henry N. Sanborn, of Indiana, reported on the new undertaking of the public library at Plainfield, In-

diana, which is just beginning house to house delivery in two townships served by the library. Each house is visited every six weeks.

The second paper of the afternoon was by Asa Wynkoop, of New York, on "Conducting Library Institutes," read by Miss Caroline F. Webster.

(See p. 250)

Miss Robinson of Iowa then spoke of the district meetings in Iowa. According to the custom there, the president of the state association and the secretary of the commission, attend each meeting. At the six held last year the average attendance was 38, and at one meeting there were more trustees than librarians present. The districts arrange their own programs.

Mr. Sanborn described the system of district meetings in Indiana. The nine districts of the state meet once, and this year in most cases twice, with some member of the Commission staff, usually the secretary, in attendance. District secretaries are appointed by the secretary of the commission and suggestions for meetings are printed in the "Library Occurrent."

Following this discussion, Mrs. Elizabeth Claypool Earl, president of the Indiana Commission, read a paper on "The value of the organization of library trustees."

"The important place the library is rapidly assuming in the educational forces of the community and the demand that those who spend public money shall use it with economy and intelligence, places an obligation upon library trustees to seek information and knowledge about what are their responsibilities and opportunities."

"The taxpayer has a right to expect the greatest good to the largest number at the least cost. The greatest good embraces the molding of public sentiment toward right thinking, bringing within reach the desired needs, to the citizen, student, poet, dreamer, lover of nature; the providing of information, inspiration and recreation. To the largest number means an intimate acquaintance with books, a friendship with the people of the community, a tactful approach and an understanding of and in-

terest in serving the public. At the least cost means value received, a business ability to appreciate that the highest salary you can afford for a well equipped librarian is the best investment for the community that you can make and will yield the largest returns of any money invested.

"There is something about the personal touch, the getting together and exchanging ideas that has a most beneficial effect on the growth and broadening of the mind. It has always seemed to me the cart was being placed before the horse. State library associations can meet until doom's day and wish for higher salaries and better hours, trained librarianship more appreciated, and the profession recognized to the dignity it so well deserves; but the progress toward the goal is so slow that you are hardly conscious of its moving."

"Through the state library association, the commission can stimulate ambition and preach progressive methods and improve conditions wonderfully, and through the summer school raise the standards of efficiency among librarians, taking conditions as they are and making some progress. But the commission can only go so far without the support and co-operation of the power that can bring things to pass, the library trustees."

"The stimulating effect of the trustees' organization is felt throughout the state. The Indiana Library Trustees' Association is a body of men and women with influence in their communities, who are awakening to the importance of the library as an educational center of their communities; and its value is keenly felt by the library commission in all its activities—the power to act and demand lies with the trustees, and I am sure it is good common sense to see, through organization, that their power is not misdirected by indifference or lack of appreciation."

"Its value is perhaps more distinctly felt in the place the library should hold as an educational force. After a state convention there immediately begins a campaign, by the trustees who have attended the state convention, for internal and external im-

provement, higher salaries, trained librarians, up-to-date methods, better hours, systematic vacation periods,—demanding that their community shall have as good if not better than any other place of its size in the state. Also the proper attitude of the public toward the library is not forgotten. Its value is specially felt by the commission in bringing about a closer and more efficient touch with the public libraries; a greater professional attitude of the library trustee; better understanding of the duties of a library trustee; better financial management of libraries; higher qualifications for librarians; rural extension of library service; and its ever increasing value in library legislation. To have a body of influential men and women taxpayers back of the library legislation counts; and it needs no argument to appreciate its real value.

"Indiana, we feel, has already proved the immense value of a trustees' association in the development of library interests and can heartily recommend to other states to do likewise."

The final paper of the first session was by Miss Mary E. Downey of Utah, on "Library and school co-operation in Utah."

(See p. 254)

Miss Downey's paper caused lively discussion. Mr. Bliss of Pennsylvania expressed his opinion that libraries in schools, whether public library branches or traveling libraries, were not successful. Mr. Galbreath of Ohio felt that although what Mr. Bliss said is true in many cases, there are great opportunities for schools and libraries to co-operate.

Miss Orpha M. Peters, of Indiana, said briefly in explanation of the work of the Gary, Ind., Public Library with the public schools: "Except for a few talks on the use and care of books and what books to read, no instruction has been given in the rural schools. However, a regular course of instruction, extending from the first grade through the high school, is given to all children in the city schools. Two weeks' work (forty-five minutes each day)

is given to high school freshmen. Five days are devoted to classification, arrangement of books and the use of the catalog, three days to general reference books, periodicals and periodical indexes and two days to examination. The course counts as a part of the regular English work in school. This year some advanced work has been given to high school seniors."

Mr. Kerr, of Emporia, Kansas, concluded the discussion with a statement of what the school library can do and what the public library and the school library can do together.

## SECOND SESSION

The second session was held on June 30, in the parlor of Columbia Hotel.

Mrs. Minnie C. Budlong, of North Dakota, was to have reported on the "Field work of the North Dakota Library Commission as outlined by the educational survey," but the survey was not complete enough for a report, and Mrs. Budlong was absent.

Mr. Franklin K. Mathiews opened the meeting with a brief talk on the importance of the boy's recreational reading. He referred to the recent legislation which gave the Boy Scouts of America the exclusive use of the name Boy Scouts. His purpose in speaking was to urge the League to take action towards a Library Week to coincide with the Good Book Week of the Boy Scouts, to be in 1916 from December 4-9. Mr. Bliss made a motion that the League suggest to the libraries of the country through the various commissions that the first week in December be observed as Library Week in conjunction with the Good Book Week of the Boy Scouts of America. Miss Downey moved an amendment to Mr. Bliss' motion to the effect that a committee of the League be appointed to work out programs and suggestions. On Mr. Bliss' acceptance of the amendment, the motion was put and carried. At a later meeting of the Executive Committee, Miss Mary E. Downey was appointed chairman of the committee and Mr. Robert E. Bliss as the other member.

### Travelling library problems

The remainder of the session was devoted to a round table on traveling library problems, conducted by Miss Anna A. MacDonald of Pennsylvania.

The discussion was opened by Miss Mary L. Titcomb, of Hagerstown, Md.

"Miss MacDonald has asked me to open the discussion of the question 'Is it possible for library commissions to give all around library service through traveling library centers?' The first step in approximating such service would be an intimate knowledge of each community to which a traveling library is to be sent, consequently in making up the personnel of a traveling library bureau we must choose first, and with care, a field agent. She must be a woman of tact, of personal charm, of knowledge of books and human nature, and of unfailing good judgment. Having found this *rara avis*, let it be her first work to canvass the traveling library field and make herself a welcome and trusted friend in each little community. When she has each of her centers well in hand she can then begin to do something for each one. We will suppose that up to this time each village has been given a traveling library of the average type.

"But now our field agent (field angel will be a better name), has discovered that no two of her parishes are alike. The first village does not want what the second one does. Our field agent will find that she wants a different library for every place in which she works, so we shall be obliged to give up at once any idea of a fixed collection marked number so and so, if we wish to approach real library service. We will suppose now, that each group is supplied with the collection best suited to its needs, a collection made most often, with the personality of a few individuals in mind. The gifted and indefatigable field agent breathes a sigh of satisfaction, and feels that now indeed she is going to be able to do much,—almost to give real library service. But let her not rest upon her oars too soon. Let her visit those groups a month or two months after they have received the carefully

handpicked collections, and what disappointments she will encounter. To be sure, she will find bright spots, at the stations where the custodian has a personal interest in the books, but in most cases she will be obliged to acknowledge that the right book has not often found its way into the hands of the right person. So our field agent gradually becomes convinced that the only way to give real library service is to have a "Library Day" for each station, when it will be understood that the field agent will be present, ready to serve the community. She finds that this works very well.

"But our woman above price has her physical limitations. She finds that in her zeal she has undertaken more than any mere mortal can endure, so perforce she is obliged to call upon the staff of the central bureau for reinforcements, and as time goes on each member of the staff will find herself with certain "Library Days" as fixed dates, with the chief or field agent cherishing and overseeing each group as best she may. This necessitates naturally a large central force, but as you may have gathered my plans are to be put into execution in a state where politics are clean, where there is no graft, and where the surplus funds can easily be used for this and other educational purposes.

"The matter of special collections for study clubs or other organizations easily adjusts itself. Each club wants something definite, which can be supplied with a little thought. The matter of general reference calls will also be one that can be worked out satisfactorily by the field agent, granting her access to some collection where she may gather her data.

"Now having her scheme in smooth running order, our field agent sees that the work of her hand and head and heart is good. Then comes that little imp that haunts the night watches and whispers in her ear, 'Yes, you have done much, they are perhaps as well or better served than if they had real permanent libraries, but have you done the right thing for those communities? Have you not perverted the function of a traveling library? Is a travel-

ing library in its very nature anything but a stepping stone or stimulus towards the foundation of a village library? And when you have given your people so much, has it not been radically antagonistic to the spirit of our democratic institutions?" You have taught them to lean upon you, to come to you and ask freely, secure in the belief that you 'will find a way.' But in making them perfectly satisfied with your service, have you not really done them an injustice? What is the greatest thing a public library can do for its community? Is not the last and best gift conferred when a library is so administered that a love of books is born in the hearts of its borrowers, when they realize that there is something better than borrowing from the library, and that is to own a library of one's own, a shelf of companions and friends within reach at all times? If we grant this, as I think we all must, then is it not the logical conclusion that a traveling library should go no further than to promote a desire for a library for the community?"

Discussion on Miss Titcomb's paper was postponed. Miss Evelyn S. Lease, of Vermont, then spoke of the "Character of collections." She said:

"Vermont traveling libraries are fixed collections made up in four kinds as follows:

"General traveling libraries containing 45 books; 15 stories and 15 non-fiction for adults; 15 of both kinds for children.

"School libraries containing 30 books; 10 stories and 18 non-fiction for children (not textbooks), and 2 books of special interest to the teacher.

"High-school libraries containing on an average 40 books. These were begun at the request of principals of high schools where there were no libraries, or where it was inadequate for the needs of older pupils, and at their suggestion, contain a large proportion of non-fiction, as well as such fiction as is 'required reading' for admission to college.

"Study club collections, each containing books on one subject, vary in size, and naturally consist largely of non-fiction.

"Under this head, we also include Farmers' libraries and Teachers' aids collections.

"Farmers' libraries contain 45 books: 20 on various phases of agriculture, 10 stories for adults, and 15 stories and non-fiction for children. These are much used by granges.

"The Teachers' aids libraries, consisting of 30 books on pedagogy approved by the State Superintendent of Education, were originally designed for groups of teachers who wished to do some professional reading, but have also been used quite extensively by training classes for rural teachers.

"To make these fixed collections as adequate as possible for the varied needs of different stations we emphasize our willingness to add to the library chosen, books on certain subjects, books asked for by authors and titles, and books for specified ages and grades, if we have them in our 'open' collection. This ever growing 'open' collection we find very useful, too, in satisfying the increasing demand from individuals for books for personal use, and in reference work.

"In addition to our book collections we have about 10,000 mounted pictures which are much appreciated by teachers and club women."

Miss Elizabeth B. Wales, of Missouri, who was to speak on "How to make up the collections," was not present, but she sent her contribution, which was read by the secretary of the League.

"Having been present at several lengthy discussions upon shelving vs. fixed group collections for traveling library work, I want to say that I am quite in accord with those who wish to preserve elasticity in traveling library combinations. Having made this confession I ask most humbly to be permitted to discuss the elements of the fixed groups. One rule can be made to apply equally to both systems, namely, it should be the exceptional case in which the traveling library should consist of fiction entirely.

"Traveling libraries may be made up in

general sets of specific number or special collections.

"The books may be purchased in fixed sets or in duplicates of two or more. In Missouri we have tried the four kinds. The ideal method would be special libraries for each borrowing center, which of course means single sets; the other method however saves a great deal of clerical labor in preparing lists and also a great deal of expert time in selection of books.

"For the fixed group duplicate library system, one must predicate that the general needs of the communities served, will be parallel. It is a fact that is more or less true. The first traveling libraries sent out from the Missouri Library Commission were proportioned as follows:

Class	Adult	Juvenile
Fiction .....	15	10
Ethics .....	2	..
Religion .....	1	1
Social .....	2	..
Natural Science .....	1	..
Useful Arts .....	2	1
Fine Arts .....	1	..
Literature .....	3	1
History .....	2	..
Travel .....	3	1
Biography .....	3	1

This makes a total of 35 volumes of books for adults and 15 volumes for juvenile readers. It is but just to give the Iowa Library Commission credit for these, the first proportions used in Missouri.

"In actual use, we found the books on useful arts and natural science in the fixed group lists were likely to miscarry. We therefore include in our libraries at present only the most general books on science and crafts. The places of these volumes were supplied by adding to literature a volume of humorous character whenever possible and to biography one book of collective biography and to history one extra book of United States history. We further found that it was difficult without knowing something about the people to select the proper volumes on ethics and religion, whereas the demand for sociology was more general. We compromised therefore, by putting in one volume of either

ethics or religion of universal interest, and replacing the other two volumes by books treating of recent social movements.

"In selecting history, travel and biography, the effort has been to make them inter-dependent rather than too varied; for instance, if our history selection contained a history of France, the travel in the library might contain a representative volume on French chateaux and the biography a life of some prominent Frenchman. The same plan has been followed in the selection of fiction when it could be done without undue effort.

"Occasionally we are asked to make up special libraries containing for instance, six or eight books on fine arts for club work and 'the rest fiction because that is what our people want to read.' In making a rule for ourselves we have said that fiction should never hold a larger proportion than that of 20 in 50 or 40 percent. When this is the case we also try to have five of the 20 volumes represent standard fiction and 15 volumes current fiction. This proportion obtains also in Ohio.

"In studying the use of the fixed group in the field, the library worker has to keep constantly in mind that the reading development of the community does not depend upon a single set of books, but upon a continuous series of exchanges. The problem of the man who wants books on a specific topic, may be met by sending additional books on request."

In the discussion on these papers, Mr. Bliss, of Pennsylvania, said that it was his experience that on his visits he found the rural patrons often could not understand the books sent, even in the case of standard fiction. For this reason, he does not think it best to send standard fiction, but more popular books. Miss Titcomb suggested the use of children's books for the grown-ups; Miss Robinson, of Iowa, said that the Iowa Commission also used children's books for adults. Miss Askew, of New Jersey, came to the defense of the rural population and said that she thought that Mr. Bliss had under-estimated the

mentality of most farmers and that she found them generally as intelligent as the people in most towns. She found that the talks by the library visitor with the rural reader often arouses his pride. Mrs. Earl, of Indiana, agreed with Miss Askew as to the intelligence of the farmer. Miss Titcomb, of Maryland, was inclined to agree with Mr. Bliss. She felt that in certain districts of the country the population was very uneven in matters of education and intelligence, and she explained that although they were obliged to use children's books for many of the adults in Washington County, the class of books borrowed from the book wagon was fifty per cent better than those read by city people. In regard to special collections, Miss Woolman, of Missouri, said they had had so many demands for books on special subjects that they were unable to furnish them, owing to lack of funds. Mr. Watson informed the audience that in New York special collections were not furnished free, but for a fee of \$1, and that special collections were borrowed with the understanding a certain number of days in the club program should be devoted to the subject for the study of which the books were borrowed. Mr. Dudgeon, of Wisconsin, took issue with the attitude of New York State and said that he felt the study clubs were the organizations which the traveling libraries were trying hard to reach and that furnishing free books to them was one of the most valuable things that the traveling libraries could do. Mr. Sanborn, of Indiana, agreed with Mr. Dudgeon and spoke of the co-operation in Indiana of the traveling libraries with the extension department of the universities, the granges, and the parent-teachers associations. Mr. Bliss said that in Pennsylvania study club books were loaned upon the condition that they should be free for the use of the whole community and not merely for the members of the study club and that when a request for a special collection came, the borrowers were asked if a general collection would not do as well. Several states reported that it was the custom in the

case of a request for special collections, to send general collections also.

The next topic on the program was, "Making the station a success." Mr. Dudgeon opened the discussion with the following information in regard to their work in Wisconsin:

"In Wisconsin we have found that the success of the traveling libraries depends upon two things. First, placing it where people will come, and second, letting people know where and what it is.

"In our judgment the ideal place is a business place—a postoffice or general store—a place of business where all ages and sexes come freely and frequently. For example, a millinery store will not ordinarily do. We prefer a business place to a school house for the reason that each year there are months when the school house is closed, each month there are days when it is not open, and each day there are many hours when the books would be inaccessible. In addition the public has never got away from the idea that the school house is only for children. Where we place it in the school house we try to get the teacher to locate it during the summer months in some other place, so the community is not without book facilities.

"There are many ways of getting publicity. We have settled down to this procedure. With each box of books there goes to the custodian a personal letter of which the following is a substantial copy: To the Librarian:

We are sending herewith four copies of the list of books in this traveling library. One of these lists is to be retained with the library. Attached to another copy of this list you will find a note "To the principal"; attached to another you will find a note "To the editor." The fourth should be posted with the sign.

We find that often the general public does not fully appreciate that there is a free traveling library in the community. These state traveling libraries belong to everybody and everybody ought to know of their existence, location, and contents. We have decided, therefore, to ask every custodian to send to the principal or other person highest in authority in the nearest



public school a list of the books in the traveling library, together with definite information as to where they are located. We are also asking you to have a similar notice sent to the editor of the paper which circulates best in the locality tributary to the traveling library. (Each of these two letters contains in addition to the list of books, a definite statement as to where the library is, and when it is open; also a cordial invitation to use the books.)

Will you not, therefore, fill out these two blank letters by inserting exact information as to the location of the library and when it is to be open? It should of course, be open practically all of the time. Will you then kindly sign the letters and send them with the attached lists of books to the persons indicated.

Yours truly,

M. S. DUDGEON,  
Secretary.

"We find that the custodians quite generally do as we ask and that notice and lists do actually reach the schoolhouse and the newspaper offices and that through these the public is well informed as to the location of the books.

Miss Hopkins, of Seaford, Delaware, continued the discussion, speaking on "The part that contact plays in making the library station a success."

"I know very little about the library station. I did, in the beginning of my book-wagon work, open my home for the benefit of the people on the farms and as many books were loaned, I presume it was successful, but when I thought of the number of those who came I was reminded of what I heard Billy Sunday say in Philadelphia about the size of his audience: 'You look,' he said, 'at the 20,000 men who are here, and call it a big crowd, but I think of the 200,000 who are not here.' So I feel about library work, but then, 'I am so green.'

"However, I am convinced that in all kinds of library work the personal equation is important and in the work of the traveling libraries, whether resting quietly and with much dignity at a station, or rolling noisily and democratically over the roads in a book-wagon, it is pre-eminently so. I am ready to confess that at the end of a

day with a traveling library, one has some small conception of what He means who said, 'Virtue has gone out of me.'

"Just an incident or two as a reason for my faith. It is my pardonable pride to loan at least one book at each home. In this case it was a woman with absolutely no taste for reading. She did not want a book—how could I interest her—gazing about in my perplexity I saw a number of patch-work quilts airing on the clothes line. I offered her 'The housekeeper's week' which she took reluctantly, but on my second visit, she desired to renew it and on my third, was most anxious to buy it.

"I wonder if you will laugh when I say that I think that the personal touch in placing 'Napoleon Jackson of the plush rocker' in the hands of a homesick woman who was actually dying for her native New York hills, or taking 'Pollyanna' to a young girl that had been shaking for weeks with chills, helped quite a bit in bringing both back to health and happiness.

"There are great possibilities in the work with traveling libraries; much will depend on the personal touch."

The final paper on this subject was that of Mrs. Belle Holcomb Johnson, of Connecticut, who told of the work of the Connecticut book-wagon:

"In February, 1910, our chairman said, 'Why don't you put on your bonnet and your gum shoes and take a box of books through East Granby, calling at the houses and lending them books? We have had traveling libraries in the Center, but they have not and will not reach the people in the Copper Hill and Spoonville districts because those people have no occasion to go to the Center.'

"It seemed to me rather a fantastic scheme and I was more than a little skeptical as to the possibility of carrying out his plan, or of keeping up the undertaking, once it was begun, but the motto of our office is

'Theirs not to reason why,  
Theirs but to do—'

"So on a winter's day, with the chair-

man's son for escort, I started out with a case containing about fifty books. These were shipped to the nearest railroad station, where we secured a horse and sleigh.

"The first day, which was only half a day when all arrangements were completed, we left books at five houses, twenty books in all, and the demand for the books was so small that the outlook for the project was decidedly dark. But our chairman had faith in the good sense and intellectual qualities of the country people and advised me to make a trial trip in Spoonville, another district of the same town.

"Literature seemed in greater demand in this section, the school supervisor was my companion on the trip, and he had prepared some of the families in advance for our coming. That day we left thirty-one books in eight families, and were warmly welcomed at each of the eight houses, though some other doors were opened very grudgingly and quickly closed again on the suspicion that I was a peddler or a book agent, and that, even if no payment was mentioned when the books were left, there would be an attempt to collect money on my next visit.

"The second trip on the next route, a month after the first trip, was very gratifying. The news had spread, and at nearly every house, requests were waiting from new patrons for calls.

"The beginnings were very small, and if a gradual increase of interest had not been apparent, the undertaking would have been given up, but the gain of one or two families, or of twenty-five books in the circulation, on each trip kept up our spirits, and made it seem worth while to continue the work.

"We served five towns, having two routes in one town. Each route occupied a day (5 a. m. to 9 p. m. in one case) and was traveled once in six weeks.

"None of the towns visited had a public library, and none of them seemed at all likely to have a library. To our surprise and gratification, the town which seemed least likely to have a library, has recently opened one, a direct result of the book

wagon, for there was no reading taste in the town. It seemed to be created by the visits of the book-wagon.

"In another town there was a desire for reading. That was evidenced by the passing from house to house of books. But such books! They were more dangerous in moral tendency and more trivial in style than the reading of any other town which I have observed. On a recent trip in this town among the fiction loaned were 'John Halifax,' 'Last days of Pompeii,' 'Our mutual friend,' 'David Copperfield,' and 'Ben Hur.' If the book wagon trip is delayed for any reason, the old paper novels come out and are circulated again, but not so largely as before.

"There is an opportunity to introduce books to readers which rarely comes in a public library. There is an advantage in choosing from a small collection. Books are read which would never be chosen from a larger collection. Then in making up the boxes to send out, I have in mind the families, and put in something especially suited to each.

"In winter I take an armful into each house to be looked over, and they are usually pleased with my selection.

"As the books are not classified, they make less distinction between fiction and other books. Of 279 books on one route, 93 are non-fiction and of 122 books loaned on another route, 52 books are non-fiction.

"The cost per volume in the circulation varies from seven cents to twelve cents.

"The largest number of families served on one route is 41. I find it almost impossible to call on each of those in one day, as the borrowers take so much time in looking over the books and making their selection. I consider the time spent this way so valuable that I cannot cut it short."

In the general discussion Mr. Dudgeon raised the question as to whether states with small appropriations like Connecticut or even states with larger appropriations, could afford to carry on house-to-house visiting and delivery of traveling library books for only a small portion of the state to the neglect of other sections. It was

his opinion that such book-wagon delivery could properly be undertaken only by county or township library systems. This raised the question of the value of visiting traveling library stations. Mr. Bliss, of Pennsylvania, felt it very essential that all traveling library stations as far as possible should be visited. He felt that it was a means of preventing the giving up of a traveling library station and of aiding in developing the reading habit in a community. Mr. Dudgeon felt that with several hundred traveling library stations in the state, such visiting were impracticable, and he asked the experience of Indiana in this matter. Mr. Sanborn replied that it was not the custom in Indiana to visit traveling library stations except very incidentally, and he questioned whether such visiting would bring sufficient returns for the amount of money and time expended. If a field visitor is employed at all in traveling library work, she should use her efforts in establishing stations rather than in visiting those already established.

On account of the program planned by the local committee for the rest of the afternoon, it was necessary to adjourn the meeting at 4 p. m. without continuing the discussion on the matter of giving definite library help through special collections and through general reference calls. Miss Julia A. Robinson, of Iowa, had planned to contribute to the discussion of special collections the following paper on "Helps through special collections."

"While the policy of fixed groups of books for general community reading has been adopted by most of our state commissions in the operation of their traveling library systems, whether the best library service for special requests can be promoted in the same manner or through an open shelf collection, seems still to be an unsettled question and is likely to remain so because of differences in local conditions, the size of book collections, the amount available for book purchases, and the office help employed to carry on the work as well as the nature of the calls coming to the commission offices.

"The advantage, as I see it, of fixed or special collections covering special subjects ready to send immediately upon receipt of requests, lies in greater promptness, perhaps, of service, and the handling of the work by a smaller office force and fewer *trained* assistants, thus making for economy in commissions with small appropriations.

"On the other hand, a small book collection may be made to serve a larger constituency if books on special subjects may be scattered among several borrowers instead of being confined to one, especially if the group includes different phases of a subject either in one book or several.

"This is especially true of periodicals from which much valuable reference material is drawn and unless the article in question is cut from the magazine, other subjects are tied up with it.

"In the third place, many of the topics most frequently called for are questions of the day or those upon which the most recent word is desired, and this is often found in the magazines and even where books are used, the frequent revision of such special collections is necessary.

"Therefore, in Iowa, though our general loan collection is comparatively large, it is thrown into one open shelf collection from which the best and most suitable material on each subject desired is selected for each request. Sometimes this may mean the same books that were used for a similar request, sometimes only part of those books, and in others a larger number, with substitutes perhaps in one or both of the latter cases.

"This requires the services of an expert reference librarian giving her entire time to the work, but we believe thereby we give better and more satisfactory individual help, and are able to answer more calls and to make our collections available to a larger number of borrowers, and with less duplication of books, than would be possible if it consisted of groups intended to cover all calls on various subjects.

"Two exceptions might perhaps be mentioned, one a Story-tellers' library contain-

ing theoretical books on story telling as well as collections of stories, and the other the provision made each year to supply the calls on the subject for debate chosen by the Inter High School Debate League. In the latter, however, the entire collection on either side is never sent to one place, but the selected material divided among the various teams calling for it.

"Much of our work is done with the women's study clubs of the state to whom outlines for the preparation of their programs are also loaned, but the arrangement of the subjects often varies. We also believe that clubs of fifteen to twenty members require more material on a subject than does a single borrower."

Miss J. Maud Campbell, of Massachusetts, was to continue the discussion, but has not sent in writing what she had planned to say.

Miss Minnie W. Leatherman, of North Carolina, was to have opened the discussion on "Definite library help through general reference calls," but had prepared no written paper.

Miss E. Louise Jones, of Massachusetts, sent the following statement of what she intended to say in the discussion:

"It is a pity to close this interesting discussion on traveling library problems with a word from a representative of a Commission which has no traveling libraries, with the exception of the foreign collection of which Miss Campbell has spoken. The conditions in Massachusetts are so different from those in other states discussed here that I fear our problems can be of little help to others. Because we have a library in every town, with one exception, the nature of our reference calls is entirely different and where other states use the traveling libraries as a center we use the local library. Thus, when a call

comes to us and we cannot answer it from our own files, we refer it if possible to the local library unless we know the local library cannot supply the material, in which case we send to the nearest large library and by inter-library loan the material is readily supplied.

"By a recent law, any resident of a town can borrow of a library in a neighboring town by consent of the board of trustees, so whenever possible the individual can get material in this way if her own library cannot obtain it.

"The State Library is always willing to lend to a small library for a limited time and the Commission has this large reference library at its disposal. There is there a very complete vertical file of ephemeral material arranged by subject, including bibliographies, pamphlets, and newspaper clippings, all of which they are ready to lend on call. They also have a splendid card index to all Massachusetts newspapers which is constantly being consulted and the important magazines are also indexed on cards daily, thus keeping the periodical material always up-to-date. The cards are weeded out as soon as the Reader's Guide appears.

"The calls come mostly from the libraries and trustees rather than from individuals or study clubs, as such calls go directly to each library and when the librarian cannot furnish material she appeals to the Commission. When the teacher and superintendents appeal to us for books on subjects needed in the schools that are not in their local library, the Commission urges the local library to furnish such requests as far as possible. When this is impossible as it often is in the small libraries a direct gift of the material needed is made from the Commission if it be of permanent value for work with the schools."